

REMARKS

The amendment to the specification clarifies the disclosure corresponding to the means for maneuvering recited in claim 1. The amendment to claim 1 is supported by the original disclosure at the last sentence of paragraph [0009]. Applicants submit that the amendment does not add any new matter to the disclosure.

Applicants hereby confirm the election of group I, claims 1-8 without traverse. Applicants have canceled the non-elected claims.

Applicants submit that the specification has been amended to more clearly indicate the portion of the specification describing the means for maneuvering the probe tip. On this basis, applicants submit that the claims and specification are now in compliance with 35 USC 112, second and sixth paragraphs.

The invention centers on a system for locally altering a feature of an existing pattern on an integrated circuit substrate. The system of the invention is characterized by the presence of a probe having a plurality of channels exiting through the probe apex where the probe apex has a width of about 0.1 to 3 microns, as well as means for maneuvering the probe and sources of two chemicals respectively coupled to first and second of the channels. This combination enables a system that can be used to precisely alter a surface feature without adverse impact on the remaining portions of the pattern or substrate.

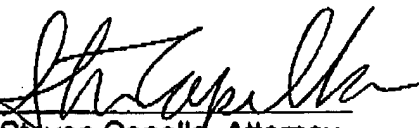
Yuasa et al. (US 6737812) discloses a plasma processing apparatus

where a spray nozzle has two gas feeds and an exhaust channel. Yuasa et al. is concerned primarily with improved exhaust removal. Yuasa et al. does not disclose or suggest an apex having the claimed dimensions. Yuasa et al. does not disclose or suggest a means for maneuvering the probe. Applicants submit that feature 18 of Yuasa et al. is a means for moving the position of the substrate, not for moving the nozzle of Yuasa et al.

Japanese Published Application 09-027482 (corresponding to Japanese Application No. 07-197997) discloses a plasma etching apparatus with a chemical input and an exhaust outlet. JP'482 does not disclose or suggest an apex having the claimed dimensions. JP'482 does not disclose or suggest a means for maneuvering the probe. Applicants submit that feature 8 of JP'482 is a means for moving the position of the substrate, not for moving the nozzle of JP'482.

For the above reasons, applicants submit that the claims are patentable and that the application is in condition for allowance. Such allowance is earnestly and respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
Hendrik F. Hamann et al.

By 
Steven Capella, Attorney
Reg. No. 33,086
Telephone: 845-894-3669